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C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIJING 001692

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/30/2028
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [CH](#) [BM](#)
SUBJECT: CHINA ADVISES BURMA TO RECONSIDER GAMBARI

REFERENDUM SUGGESTIONS; BURMA ACCEPTS GAMBARI VISIT IN MAY

REF: STATE 45471

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Aubrey Carlson. Reasons 1.4
(b/d).

¶1. (C) Responding to reftel points delivered by PolOff, MFA Burma, Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam Division Deputy Director Chen Chen on April 30 said that the Chinese Government has "advised" the Burmese Government to "positively reconsider" previous suggestions offered by UN Special Adviser Gambari to help ensure that the May 10 referendum is free and fair. China specifically suggested that Burma allow international observers to monitor the referendum, Chen said. Chen mentioned that within the last ten days, high-level Foreign Ministry officials from China and Burma had discussed the referendum process on the sidelines of an international meeting. (Note: Chen did not specify which officials or what meeting.)

¶2. (C) Chen stated that after China's urging, the Burmese Government has agreed to a visit by Gambari in late May and should be informing Gambari April 30 of its decision.

¶3. (C) PolOff reiterated the need for the international community to respond strongly to the seriously-flawed referendum process given the regime's record of ignoring and criticizing Gambari. Noting that he was speaking personally, Chen said China had no involvement in the development of internationally-recognized standards for elections, and he did not think the Chinese Government would make pre- or post-referendum statements condemning the Burmese regime's referendum process.

¶4. (C) Chen said that, given the seriousness of U.S. concerns, he would certainly convey the U.S. message to his superiors, noting in particular our request that China not welcome the referendum as progress in a democratic transition.

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